

about. In a week or so after the bird is once more in full plumage, I noticed that here and there along the narrow vane, a shaft was absent, but in quite irregular spots, until at last, after perhaps about a month, the shafts are bare, and the racquets which broaden out at the extremities have appeared—or, rather, are emphasized.

My Motmot is in magnificent condition—a condition which no bird in a wild state could excel,—his vigour and tightness of plumage being very fine, so that I have a good subject to study.

As a description of my Motmot, with his interesting habits, will be published in the 'Avicultural Magazine,' along with a coloured plate of two birds, the one showing the tail as first grown, the other with the bare shafts and racquets, I will not further enlarge upon the subject or trespass upon valuable space.

XVII.—*Obituary.*

HENRY EELES DRESSER.

As was briefly announced in the last number of 'The Ibis,' Mr. Dresser died at Cannes on November 28 last, at the age of seventy-seven. He was one of the oldest members of the Union, having been elected as long ago as 1865. He held the post of Secretary from 1882 to 1888, and was always active and prominent in the affairs of the Union and in ornithology generally till a year or two ago, when he became an invalid and was no longer able to take part in our discussions.

Dresser was born on May 9, 1838, at Thirsk, in Yorkshire, where his grandfather had founded the Thirsk Bank. His father, being a younger son, migrated to London in 1845 and started as a Baltic timber-merchant. Young Dresser, after being at school at Bromley, in Kent, and at a German school near Hamburg, entered his father's business and travelled extensively in northern Europe from 1854 to 1862. Early in 1863 he took a cargo out to Texas, then

one of the Confederate States, during the northern blockade. In 1870 he started business in London in the metal trade, but he continued to travel extensively throughout the whole of his life, and from the time when he was at school in Germany he began to collect eggs and bird-skins systematically. His collections, almost entirely of the eggs and skins of Palearctic birds (the latter about 12,000 in number), were deposited in the Manchester Museum at various times from 1899 onwards. Each specimen is fully authenticated and adequately labelled. The care with which he attended to these matters rendered his collection one of the most valuable in the country.

Dresser's first scientific paper was devoted to his "Notes on the Birds of Southern Texas," and was published in 'The Ibis' in 1865. From that date until 1909 he has constantly contributed papers and letters to our journal, but his most important work is undoubtedly the well-known 'History of the Birds of Europe, including all the species inhabiting the Western Palearctic Region.' This work was commenced in 1871 in collaboration with the late Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe, but after the publication of several parts Dresser continued the work alone. Eight quarto volumes were issued between 1871 and 1881, illustrated with 633 hand-coloured plates, prepared mainly from drawings by Joseph Wolf and J. C. Keulemans. A ninth volume, forming a Supplement, was completed in 1895-6, and the whole forms a monument of the industry and accuracy of the author.

Other works were as follows:—

A Monograph of the Meropidæ, or Family of Bee-eaters. 1 vol. London, 1884-86. Small folio.
With 34 plates.

A Monograph of the Coraciidæ, or Family of Rollers. 1 vol. Farnborough, Kent, 1893. Small folio.
With 27 plates.

Manual of Palearctic Birds. London, 1902-1903. 8vo.
Eggs of the Birds of Europe. London, 1905-1910. 4to.

Dresser belonged to the old order of systematic ornithologists who did not believe in subspecies or trinomials, and

his views on the limits of specific variation and nomenclature would not perhaps commend themselves to present-day workers. All he wrote, however, was marked by a thorough and a rigid accuracy of description and attention to detail, and he took special pains to get his illustrations executed and reproduced in the most perfect manner possible, so that his monographs and the 'Birds of Europe' were as monuments of ornithological literature. His death is a great loss to us all, and removes one more link in the chain connecting us with the giants of the middle of the nineteenth century.

DANIEL GIRAUD ELLIOT.

From 'Science' we learn with great regret of the death of Dr. Elliot, which took place on the 22nd of December last, from pneumonia, in his home in New York. He had reached the advanced age of 80 years and had become the "doyen" of American naturalists.

Born in New York City, March 7, 1835, Dr. Elliot was the fourth son of George T. and Rebecca Giraud Elliot. His father was of old Connecticut stock, which had settled in America in the sixteenth century, and was of Scottish origin, while on his mother's side he was descended from French ancestors.

Delicate in his early years, he was unable to take a college course and spent much time in travelling. He came to London in 1859, and as he relates in a eulogy of our late editor, Dr. P. L. Selater, there met him and many of the other mid-Victorians and the early M. B. O. U.'s. During the sixties he was busily engaged in forming a collection of birds and preparing his monographs of the Tetraonidæ and the Pittidæ. His collections passed into the possession of the American Museum of Natural History in New York in 1868, and form the foundation of the vast stores which have since been accumulated there. During these years, as he tells us in an address before the Linnean Society of New York in 1914, there were only three working ornithologists in America besides himself—George Lawrence

in New York, John Cassin in Philadelphia, and S. F. Baird at Washington.

In 1869 Dr. Elliot left America primarily for study, but also with a commission from the Trustees of the American Museum to purchase any collections which he thought advisable. He secured for the Museum those of Prince Maximilian of Neuwied, who had lately died, and had travelled extensively in South America and the western part of the United States, making large collections. He also selected many rare birds from the Verreaux collection in Paris, and from those of other dealers in Amsterdam and London. At this time he purchased a specimen of the Great Auk in winter plumage for £105; this is now one of the most cherished possessions of the American Museum. During this period Elliot lived principally in London, and was very well known to all the English ornithologists of those days.

Returning to America in 1883, he brought with him a wonderful collection of Humming-birds, which he presented in 1887 to the American Museum, while his extensive ornithological library also passed to the same institution by purchase.

In 1894 Elliot became Curator of Zoology of the newly-founded Field Columbian Museum at Chicago. This post he held until 1906, when he resigned and returned to New York. During this period he made an expedition to Africa in the interests of the Museum, selecting, on the advice of the late Dr. Selater, the Somaliland country for this purpose. Though even then over sixty years of age, he was wonderfully successful and succeeded in bringing back a large collection of birds and mammals, which not only became the basis of important exhibits in the museum, but of several valuable papers giving the results of his explorations.

After settling down in New York in 1906, Elliot gave up birds and occupied himself with 'A Review of the Primates,' begun in 1906 and completed in 1912, and published in three volumes by the American Museum. In order to examine all the types of this group, Elliot travelled round

the world, through all the European capitals, and through India and China, back to America.

Last year, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday, the American Museum made public recognition of his services by the publication of a brief biographical sketch with several portraits, and at the same time presenting to him an address signed by the whole of the Museum staff, and recording their "grateful appreciation of his services as an expert adviser of the Museum in its early days" (*Amer. Mus. Journ.* xv. 1915, pp. 133-141), while the Linnean Society of New York in the previous year held a dinner in his honour and presented him with their medal.

Elliot will be chiefly remembered for his series of magnificent illustrated monographs on various groups of birds, rivalling those of Gould in their fine plates, chiefly from the brush of Wolf and Keulemans, though his earlier works were mainly illustrated from his own drawings. The following is a list of some of his most important ornithological publications:—

- A Monograph of the Pittidæ or Family of the Ant-Thrushes. 31 pls. col. with descriptive letterpress. New York, 1863. Folio: 2nd ed. 51 pls. col. London, 1893-5. Folio.
- A Monograph of the Tetraoninæ, or Family of the Grouse. 27 pls. col. with descriptive letterpress. New York, 1865. Folio.
- The New and Heretofore Unfigured Species of the Birds of North America. 2 vols. 72 pls. col. New York, 1869. Folio.
- A Monograph of the Phasianidæ, or Family of Pheasants. 2 vols. 48 pls. col. New York, 1872. Folio.
- A Monograph of the Paradiseidæ, or Birds of Paradise. 37 pls. col. with descriptive letterpress. London, 1873. Folio.
- A Monograph of the Bucerotidæ, or Family of the Hornbills. 59 pls. col. with descriptive letterpress. London, 1876-1882. Imp. 4to.
- A Classification and Synopsis of the Trochilidæ. Pp. xii+277. Washington (Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge), 1879. 4to.
- North American Shore-Birds. Pp. xvi+268. New York and London, 1895. 8vo.
- The Gallinaceous Game-Birds of North America. Pp. 220, 46 pls. London, 1897. 8vo.
- The Wild Fowl of the United States and British Possessions. Pp. xxii+316. New York, 1898. 4to.

Dr. Elliot was elected a Member of our Union in 1870, and only resigned in 1906 when he had turned his whole attention to Mammals. He wrote a paper for the first volume of 'The Ibis,' and is certainly the last survivor of those who did so; he also contributed many other papers to the pages of 'The Ibis' and the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society' while settled in England. He was a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He was one of the founders of the American Ornithologists' Union in 1883 and its President for two years (1890-91), and an active member of its Council for twenty-eight years.

Dr. Elliot was a man of striking personality as can be seen by his portrait, reproduced in the American Museum Journal. Many of our older members will remember his snow-white hair and beard set off by his flashing black eyes. Somewhat dignified and reserved in manner, conservative though broad-minded, he was most constant and sympathetic in his personal friendships, and his many writings, dating from almost boyhood to the present day, will keep him always in memory.

ERIC FRANK PENN.

We regret that we have not previously noticed the death of Capt. E. F. Penn, 4th Battalion Grenadier Guards, who fell in action near Vermelles, in northern France, on October 18 last year.

Born in London, April 17, 1878, the son of William and Constance Penn, of St. Albans Court, Dover, he was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge; he subsequently became a partner in Messrs. Carden & Co., of Threadneedle St. During the South African war he served with the 3rd Batt. Royal Scots and attained the rank of Captain. He again joined the army at the commencement of the present war, obtaining a commission in the Grenadier Guards.

Capt. Penn was a keen sportsman and a fine shot, and

was thus interested in birds. He joined the Union in 1898. He was also a good cricketer, playing at Lords for the Eton XI. in 1896 and 1897, and for the Cambridge XI. in 1899 and 1902.

CHARLES STONHAM.

We regret to hear that Col. Charles Stonham, C.M.G., died on January 31 last, at his residence 4 Harley St., from the effects of a severe illness contracted while on service with the forces in Egypt.

Born in March 1858, he was the son of Mr. T. G. Stonham, of Maidstone, and was educated at King's School, Canterbury, and at University College, London, where he was Aitchison Scholar and Gold Medallist in medicine, obstetric medicine, and surgery. He was for many years connected with the Westminster Hospital, where he became Senior Surgeon in 1897. He was also at one time a member of the Board of Examiners in Anatomy for the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons.

During the South African war he was Chief Surgeon and the Officer Commanding the Imperial Yeomanry Field Hospital, and for his services he was mentioned in dispatches, received a medal and four clasps, and was appointed C.M.G. During the present war he went to Egypt as Lt.-Col. in command of the London Mounted Brigade Field Ambulance; he became Inspector of Hospitals there, but his health failed and he had to return to Europe at the end of last year.

Stonham was much interested in Natural History and especially in British Birds, of which he had a considerable collection. He was the author of 'The Birds of the British Islands,' published by Grant Richards in twenty parts between 1906 and 1911. This work is illustrated by 318 uncoloured plates by Miss Lilian M. Medland and contains much useful and valuable information, including an interesting bibliography of British Birds by Major Mullens. Stonham was elected a Member of the Union in 1893, and contributed a short paper to 'The Ibis' (1909, p. 619) on the curious

heel-pads found in the nestling Green Woodpecker; these are also known to be present in the Wryneck and the Barbet (*Cyanops*).

By a printer's error Col. Stonham's name was accidentally omitted from the last printed list of our Members, but he was a M.B.O.U. till his death, which deprives us not only of an enthusiastic fellow-ornithologist, but also of a brilliant surgeon.

XVIII.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

Bonhote on Vigour.

[Vigour and Heredity. By J. Lewis Bonhote, M.A., F.L.S., F.Z.S. Pp. 1-276, with coloured and uncoloured plates and diagrams in text. London (West, Newman & Co.), 1915. 8vo.]

The study of the principles which underlie the inheritance of characters is the only road along which we are likely to make much headway in the elucidation of the many outstanding problems which are for ever confronting the zoologist of today. The laws, for instance, which govern the evolution of geographic species or subspecies; the problem of many very closely allied species inhabiting the same localities, living under the same conditions, and yet differing slightly and constantly without the intermingling of characters; the ready adaptability of some species, the immutability of others; the fertility of some hybrids, the infertility of others. These and a host of other kindred problems which will readily suggest themselves are, as Mr. Bonhote implies in his recent book on "Vigour and Heredity," not likely to be solved except as the result of much patient investigation, in the experimental breeder's pen, in the gardens of the horticultural scientist, or in the laboratory of the physiologist. If the assiduous collection and description of daily increasing hosts of specific or subspecific entities, necessary as that colossal task has been, has not advanced us very far towards the solution